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CU, RU
SUBJECT: (U) EUR A/S FRIED, S SEPTEMBER 27, 2007, MEETING
WITH PORTUGUESE POLITICAL DIRECTOR VASCO BRAMAO RAMOS

Classified By: (U) Classified by: EUR Assistant Secretary of State
Daniel Fried, Department of State. Reason 1.4 (b and d)

2.(U) September 27 2007, 10:30 a.m., New York

13. (U) Participants:

United States
A/S Dan Fried, EUR
Elaine Samson, EUR (Notetaker)

Portugal
Political Director Vasco Bramao Ramos
MFA Europe Officer Joao Ribeiro de Almeida

14. (C) SUMMARY. Portuguese Political Director Ramos
reassured the United States that EU and U.S. policy on
Cuba are converging. A/S Fried advised that Cuba needed
to go through a normal post-Communist transformation
(i.e., one resembling the democratization course of
Central and East European states after 1989), and not a
communist-controlled transfer of power. He urged that
Europe not, for the sake of a false stability, support
a continued dictatorial regime. Ramos admitted that
for the EU, the continuation of KFOR is a political
issue rather than a legal one, and predicted that the
Europeans would end up with a consensus to support an
independent Kosovo even absent a UNSCR, but only at the
last minute. A/S Fried suggested that Portugal be alert
for a surprise maneuver by Russia on Kosovo, and Ramos
promised to be very hard on the Russians in his
upcoming visit. Fried urged Ramos to warn Russia to not
recognize Abkhazia in the wake of Kosovo independence,
and noted Russian incursions into Georgian territory.
Portugal should convey that Russia risked condemnation
by the international community if it re-opened
territorial arrangements that followed the end of the
USSR in 1991. END SUMMARY.

Cuba

15. (C) Portuguese Political Director Ramos gave a
brief readout of his September 26 meeting with WHA A/S
Shannon (septel) and their discussion on Cuba. Ramos
asserted that the EU and US positions on Cuba are
converging and are now not far apart. A/S Fried noted
that it is a very delicate moment in the political
transition in Cuba, and that when the transition occurs,

the EU must not, in the name of false stability, accept the continuation of a dictatorial regime. Both Ramos and Fried agreed that it would be good if the US and EU were able to do something to help the transition, but that ultimately it must be done by the Cubans themselves. Cuba needs to follow a normal path of post-Communist transformation, like Poland and Hungary, hopefully avoiding the bloodshed of the overthrow of the Ceausescu regime.

Kosovo

¶6. (C) A/S Fried noted that at the September 26 Transatlantic Dinner some of the strongest presentations on Kosovo were from Javier Solana and NATO Sec Gen Jaap de Hoop Scheffer. EU and NATO lawyers see an ample legal basis for EU and NATO missions in Kosovo even absent a new UNSCR; UNSCR 1244 in this case would remain in effect and does not prohibit an independent Kosovo. Solana and de Hoop Scheffer noted to the Ministers that UNSYG Ban Ki-Moon had indicated that he will support the interpretation continuing UNSCR 1244 and maintaining KFOR. Ramos bluntly admitted that for the EU it is not really matter of legal interpretation, but that it is a political issue. If the political decision is made to support a unilateral declaration of independence (UDI) by Kosovo, national and European lawyers will find legal arguments to justify it. Ramos predicted that the EU would end up with a consensus to support Kosovo post-independence, but that it would be at the last moment) on December 9, 10 or 11. A/S Fried noted that Secretary Rice had been very clear that moving forward to Kosovo's independence after December 10 has risks, but not moving ahead has greater risks.

Russia

¶7. (C) Fried also noted the need to be alert for surprise moves on Kosovo by Russia in the final week before December 10, as Putin has a habit of springing last minute complications. Ramos noted that he was going to Russia next week and that he was going to "hammer them on Kosovo." Ramos committed to telling the Russians what had to be done in Kosovo and that every country needed to be on board so the situation did not fall apart.

¶8. (S) Fried suggested that the Portuguese might want to lay down a marker and warn the Russians that recognizing Abkhazia in the wake of Kosovo independence would be dangerous. Fried urged Ramos to warn the Russians that they will be condemned by the international community if they re-open the territorial arrangements that emerged from the 1991 breakup of the Soviet Union. Fried told Ramos that the USG understood that the leader of an Abkhaz unit recently killed in Upper Kodori Valley appeared to be an active duty Russian soldier. Fried noted that while the USG was not making a major public issue of this incident at this time, this constituted another incursion into Georgian territory. Fried also noted that in a recent discussion about Russia, the Portuguese Ambassador in Washington acknowledged that he EU was re-evaluating Russia. Fried congratulated the EU for its recent progress on regulating energy markets, which will affect the Russian energy giant Gazprom.

RICE